

Living and Functioning under Terror

P. J. Bradley

Member, Northern Irish Assembly

Party Spokesman, Agriculture and Rural Development

Deputy Whip – SDLP Northern Ireland Assembly Group

CONTENT

- 1. Introduction*
- 2. The Beginning*
- 3. Living and Functioning under Terror*
- 4. Religious Divides*
- 5. Fear – An Ingredient of Terrorism*

INTRODUCTION

I sincerely hope that each and every one of you can understand my Northern Irish accent because I clearly recall being introduced on a platform in the town square in Newry, South Carolina, some years ago “as, P.J. the mayor with the funny accent.” Of course, I was thinking that the people sharing the platform and those present in the town square that afternoon were the ones that had funny accents.

I am pleased to be with you at this very important conference as we unite to pave the way for the children of today and for generations yet unborn. It is the common desire of right thinking people worldwide that every nation should be free of the scourge of local terrorism and as inheritors of the earth, we must endeavor to pass on a world free from global terrorism.

I wish to thank the organizers of this five-day workshop for the kind invitation to my colleagues and I to be present here in Los Alamos. I sincerely hope that my presentation will give you some insight as to what living under active terrorism and the constant threat of terrorism has been like on the other side of the Atlantic.

I wish to compliment those responsible for initiating the five-day program and on their efforts to establish how best to deal with, and pre-empt, the terrorist related threats that lie ahead. The children of America, indeed the children of the world and those people around the globe who cherish the dreams and benefits of a free world, look to and depend upon the USA to guarantee their freedom and the freedom of people everywhere regardless of class, creed, color, or religion.

Confronting Terrorism – 2002

“ Living and Functioning under Terror – P. J. Bradley ♦ ©

Coming from Ireland, as my colleague Gerard and I do, in view of the tremendous input of consecutive American administrations towards the Irish Peace Process, I, as an Irishman, believe it appropriate to avail myself of this opportunity to simply say, “Thank You America.”

As a political representative, I ask that you remain by our side on the journey that you have encouraged us to embark upon, and which please God, will lead to a new peaceful and agreed Ireland.

THE BEGINNING

I was brought up in a Nationalist home where reunification of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland was advocated and where the memories of the United Irishmen of 1798, a mainly Protestant group that rebelled against England, and the memories of those who participated in the 1916 Irish Rebellion were revered and cherished.

It is worthwhile recalling that the men and women of Easter, 1916, who took to arms never fired a shot in anger at a fellow Irishman. The only enemies they knew and opposed were the Irish-based members of the British Establishment and forces of the Crown. Those men and women of 1916 were the first, and for many, the only and true I.R.A.

The I.R.A.

Actually, there was little or no support at that time for the actions of the 1916 Republicans and it was only following their executions by the British they earned posthumous respect and entered the history books as heroes. This was clearly demonstrated in the results of the first elections following the executions, which resulted in a landslide victory for the political representatives of the I.R.A.

Part of our island was then granted its freedom and the new government in Dublin set up an administration and established its own security forces. The Garda Síochána replaced the Royal Irish Constabulary and the Irish Army replaced the British Army. Since that time, however, dissidents opposed to the division of Ireland have continued to take up arms in the belief that terror is the only way to completely remove the British presence. These groups were declared illegal, and remain illegal in the jurisdictions of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Having said that, the illegal status ruling by both jurisdictions has never prevented individuals and groups, within the Nationalist community, from attempting to organize and re-organize the paramilitaries. There is some consolation in the fact that no paramilitary groups formed since 1922, ever gained the full support of the Irish people, and were never deemed as equals to the rebels of 1916.

The Old I.R.A.

The Government of the Republic of Ireland to this day continues to promote and attend annual commemoration ceremonies to honor the men and women of 1916 and who eventually became known as the Old IRA. At the same time, that jurisdiction has no difficulty in referring to the plethora of paramilitary groups that has emerged since then as nothing more than terrorists.



LIVING AND FUNCTIONING UNDER TERROR

“Living and Functioning under Terror” is a very appropriate title for the facts and comments I wish to present to you this morning. I have lived, worked, and helped to raise a family through the thirty years of turmoil that has existed in Ireland since the beginning of the 1970s in what became more commonly known as “The Troubles.”

800 Years of Conflict in Ireland

History shows that there has been conflict in Ireland for over eight hundred years and weapons of war were used throughout every century. Political terrorism is difficult to define but in Ireland, it can be listed under three distinctive headings.

Confronting Terrorism – 2002

“ *Living and Functioning under Terror* – P. J. Bradley ♦ ©

- First, there are those who kill in the belief that they can achieve a United Ireland by means of the bomb and the bullet.
- Second, there are those with Loyalists and British persuasions who believe that killing is necessary to retain the links with Britain or, as they prefer to call it "The Mainland."
- Third, there are those who kill just to retaliate. This is particularly true of the Loyalist terrorist groups. When carrying out retaliatory killings they simply drive into a Nationalist area and shoot the first person unfortunate enough to come to their attention.

In the century that we have recently left behind, the conflict raised its head in no fewer than eight of its ten decades, and I am saddened to say that in this new decade, new century, new millennium, the killings continue. Yes, we have our Peace Process but a number of dissidents mainly from the Loyalist side, but not exclusively, seem determined on getting the conflict up and going again. I can say without fear of contradiction that an overwhelming majority of people on the Island of Ireland and in the United Kingdom is totally opposed to a return to violence.

Current Concerns

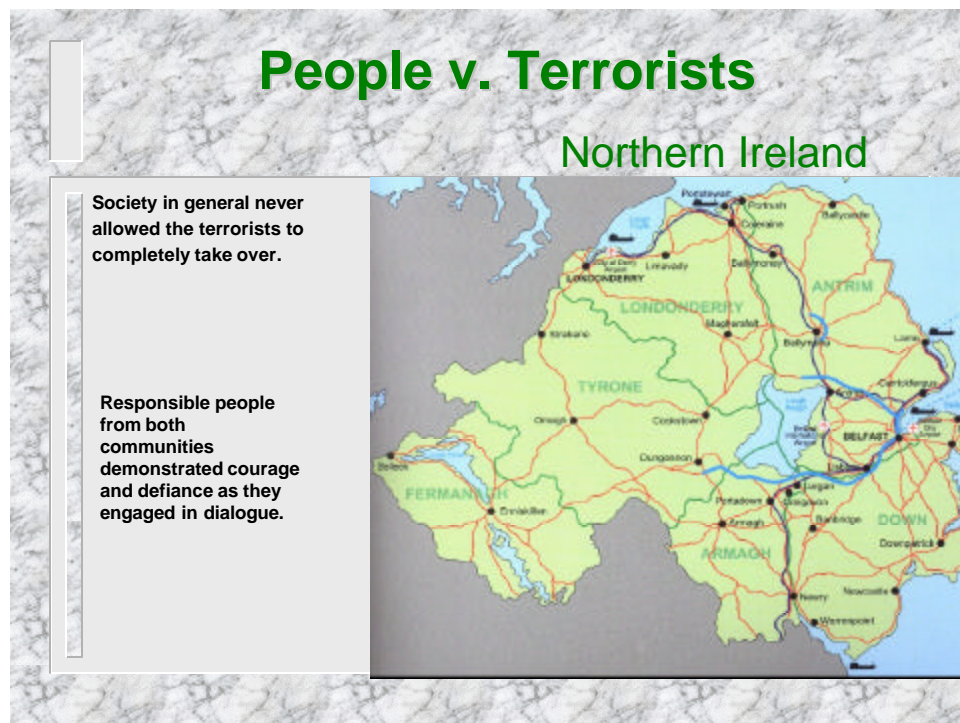
The one major and current point of contention between the Nationalist/Catholic Community and the Police Service is the fact that since the Good Friday Agreement, there have been almost 100 paramilitary murders and approximately 800 gun attacks with **only one conviction**. Government statistics released at the end of January past show also that since the Good Friday Agreement loyalists have been responsible for more than 500 pipe bomb attacks on Catholic homes and Republicans have been responsible for over 80 such attacks.

Conflict or War?

I referred earlier to the fact that everyone but the terror groups themselves, knew the thirty years of conflict in Northern Ireland throughout Ireland as “The Troubles.” They would have the world and us believe that they were fighting a war. Nothing could be further from the truth. I believe that I can present to you this morning the reason why the conflict was never allowed to become a war or a civil war in Northern Ireland where the conflict was centered.

People vs. Terrorists

Society in general never allowed the terrorists to completely take over. Responsible people from both communities demonstrated courage and defiance of terrorism and sectarianism as they created and continued to engage in dialogue with those across the political and religious divide. Cross community groups were formed in every possible corner of Northern Ireland where Protestants and Catholics lived side by side. In the vast majority of areas, people continued to socialize and engage in structured sporting activities. Farmers worked their respective holdings with regular assistance and continual contact with their neighboring farmers, regardless of political or religious persuasion. The efforts of hundreds of other groupings also helped to retain some level of sanity throughout those difficult times. I single out for specific mention, the constant peace promoting efforts of the Trade Union Movement for its never-ending commitment towards the eradication of sectarianism. In addition, the grouping known as “the leaders



of the four main churches,” comprised of the leaders from the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church (it is known in Ireland as the Church of Ireland), the Methodists, and the Presbyterian Church played an important and very significant role. Specifically, they constantly declared their stance against the paramilitaries and the evils of terrorism. I wish to acknowledge the courageous role, played by many of the Protestant clergymen, in view of the fact that their ecumenical theory was more difficult to champion within their respective religious groupings. It is also regrettable that the activities of the four main church groups were somewhat curtailed by sectarian attitudes within lower tiers of their respective congregations and establishments.

RELIGIOUS DIVIDES

On reflection, the spirit of togetherness was continually promoted and maintained among the rural and village communities. Regrettably, coordination of such levels of cooperation was more difficult, if not impossible, to achieve in the urban sprawls or densely populated areas of our large towns. Geographically speaking, housing estates appear on maps as neighboring estates, but the residents of these ghettos or large residential developments have no contact whatsoever, with their so-called neighbors because of their proclaimed “**religious differences.**” Incidentally, it is worth noting that divided on religious grounds, as they are, the people I refer to have one thing in common, and that is, very few of them actually attend church on Sunday.

Civil Rights

In the late 1960s, Nationalist/Catholics took to the streets under the banner of the Civil Rights Movement. This was a desperate attempt by the under privileged to seek equal working opportunities, better housing, and the introduction of a one-man, one-vote system. The lack of employment was perhaps the greatest grievance of all.

In large Nationalist areas such as Derry, Belfast and, nearer to my home, Newry, it was normal to have unemployment figures of 50% and more recorded among the employable male population. This did cause great resentment among all sections of the Nationalist community. After a number of years of civil unrest and street demonstrations, the government did eventually take on board, the unemployment problem and successfully introduced fair employment legislation. The legislation introduced and which is still in place today, imposed upon employers, large and small, the demand that they must create a balanced workforce drawn from both sections of the community. The joy here came from the fact that so much was achieved by peaceful, legal means.

This development went a long way towards eliminating discrimination in job appointments and promotions within places of employment and is now understandably acceptable. The creation of a mixed workforce has, I believe, led to better overall community relations in many areas, but in particular, among the Civil Service and white collar workers.

However, problems remain particularly in the cities of Belfast and Derry where a large section of the workforce is employed in integrated places of work. After-work social exchanges are practically non-existent when the workers return to their homes in single identity communities. Regrettably, we still have what are known as Protestant and Catholic housing estates.

To this day, work is not plentiful or readily available to the residents of the large estates and it is from within these estates that the highest levels of unemployment are still recorded. It is not mere coincidence that during "The Troubles," it was from within these estates that the terrorist groups found the most willing recruits.

Unemployment

It is the belief of the godfathers of terrorism, a belief that I cannot challenge, that unemployment does assist in adding to the ranks of the paramilitary groups. Poverty has always been the dray of social unrest and rebellion. Unemployment is almost an essential ingredient of recruitment drives by terrorist groups if they are to meet with success. It is easy to persuade a young person who has no job, no prospects of a job, and no hope of a reasonable future, to join anti-establishment causes. They are easy prey for the terrorist recruitment officers and easier still if they are offered a little financial incentive to volunteer for “the cause.”

FEAR – AN INGREDIENT OF TERRORISM

I wish to present to you my views as to what encouraged terrorism and what went into its survival. Fear is perhaps the main ingredient. Non-supporters of terrorism turned a blind eye to the activities of the paramilitaries in their area. No one debates that when good men do nothing, evil triumphs. However, the consequences of standing against violence, even for being labeled as a provider of information, however trivial, were disastrous. Many brave men and women on both sides of the divide paid those dues.

The unfortunate law-abiding, community-conscious individual would be brought, by the paramilitaries, before what is termed a Kangaroo Court -- a court that was never too concerned as to how a verdict was reached. Only one sentence was expected and only one sentence was given. The sentence was always **DEATH**. Following execution, victims would traditionally be dumped along the roadside, shot in the back of the head with their hands tied behind their backs. In some cases, bodies would be found totally unclothed.

Members of paramilitary groups found guilty of passing on information to the authorities met the same fate, but only after they went through horrendous torture at the hands of their erstwhile colleagues. Many of these unfortunates had lower than average IQ's and would have been identified earlier by the Security Forces as possible sources of information. Their interrogation would take place in isolated buildings or in rooms known as “Romper Rooms.” In most cases, a period of ten or twelve days would elapse between the time the victims were apprehended and the administration of terrorist-style justice.

Non-Proliferation

The paramilitary grapevine would go into overdrive to assure that members of the public were advised that the drastic measures taken were carried out because the victim was ‘a Tout.’ Tout is the slang word for informer and is used to demean the victim and his or her family and to serve notice to other would-be informers. This, most certainly, did cause fear and terror to reign side by side.

In the early days of the Provisional I.R.A., throughout the 1970s, the organization was plagued by informers who regularly reported from within its ranks and by Government agents who made their way into the organization. This occurred to such a degree that the movement was almost decimated. The leadership of the paramilitary group, known as the Army Council set about addressing this internal problem, which eventually led to the initiation of the cell system.

Dealing with ‘Touts’ (informers)

- The cell system created small confined units.
- More difficult for the informers or authorities to infiltrate.

The cell system simply created small confined units of the organization in which the identities of the membership were known only to fellow members of a specific cell and to the leadership. Life-long neighbors could in fact be members of the I.R.A. without any knowledge of the other’s involvement. This did go a long way to eradicate the creation of potential informers from within and it made the task of infiltrating the movement from the outside all the more difficult to attain.

Outside the ranks of the Republican paramilitaries, one could easily become a legitimate target. Storeowners, for example, who served members or part time members of the security forces, became, together with their premises, a target for the men of terror. Many businessmen who simply sold supplies and services to military establishments or police depots, paid with their lives for ignoring the dictates of the godfathers of terrorism. Cleaners, cooks, and maintenance workers who worked at police stations, even in low-paying jobs, were listed by the paramilitaries as legitimate targets. Failure to pay protection money was another sure way to incur the wrath of the terrorist groups. Victims of extortion kept their secrets to themselves simply because revelation of the details would present unimaginable risk to their families, themselves, and to their properties. Ransom money for the safe return of kidnapped businessmen or family members, although not a regular occurrence, was another attempted method of taking over society.

In addition, the poorly thought-out actions of the Security Forces often presented the terrorist machine with golden opportunities to recruit new members. Heavy-handed attitudes at checkpoints, raids on homes, attempts to recruit informers, and damage to property were all seized upon as opportunities to seek out volunteers from among the offended. Incidents more serious than these occurred when the members of the Security forces were known to be, or believed to be, involved in the killing or wounding of unarmed civilians. That resulted in an influx of volunteers to the paramilitaries especially in the areas where the forces of law and order stepped out of line.

No area of Northern Ireland was exempt from the evil actions of the men of terror and all elements of society suffered in a multitude of terrifying ways. The area of Northern Ireland in which I live, is a predominantly Nationalist/Catholic region which perhaps suffered a lot less than many other more devastated regions. However, we did not escape the evil of the gunman or bomber. I lost seven personal friends during those futile years.

Defenders of the Catholic/Nationalist People

The Provisional I.R.A., **without any mandate** from anyone, took on the role of defenders of the Catholic/Nationalist people. Their so-called protection of my area included bombing into oblivion, all six hotels in the vicinity. The Port of Warrenpoint, which provides substantial employment, was a legitimate target as far as the terrorists were concerned. Customs Officer Ivan Toombs was shot dead by the I.R.A. as he worked at his desk in a harbor office. Mr. Toombs served as a part-time member of the security forces.

Another I.R.A. attack, which took place in April 1989, resulted in a tragic death and in driving a locally owned builder supplies company completely out of business.

On that occasion, 20-year-old office clerk Joanne Reilly died when a no-warning bomb exploded in the yard of the company where she worked. The target was the police station located immediately next door. While the police station was extensively damaged, Joanne Reilly, the innocent victim, was murdered before her life really began. She became what the I.R.A. recognized as being “collateral damage.” The company was closed and with the closure, valuable jobs were lost.



Defenders of the Catholic/ Nationalist People ?

- 20 YEAR OLD Joanne Reilly died when a no warning bomb exploded in her employers yard.
- Thomas Niedermayer, 45-year old German industrialist, was kidnapped by the IRA and died in captivity.

TERRORISM THRIVES WHERE UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL DEPRIVATION EXISTS.

Grundig, one of the largest electronic companies in the world at that time, had commenced negotiations regarding the setting up of a large factory in the town of Newry that would have employed many workers. However, the plan was short lived. Thomas Niedermayer, a forty-five year old German industrialist who managed another Grundig

Confronting Terrorism – 2002

“ *Living and Functioning under Terror* – P. J. Bradley ♦ ©

factory outside Belfast, was kidnapped and murdered by the I.R.A. His body was found seven years later, with hands and feet tied, in a shallow grave outside Belfast. The Newry Grundig project, with its promise of over 3,000 good-paying jobs was never again mentioned.

I single out these specific incidents not only because they happened on my doorstep but also to highlight my belief that terrorism can only thrive where unemployment and social depravation exists. Unemployment is necessary for paramilitaries to survive and they have no compunctions against causing and maintaining the impoverished economic conditions on which they feed.

The date, September 11, 2001, likely will echo throughout this conference as the events and consequences of that terrible day are recalled. I stated in my opening remarks that I had lived through thirty years of terrorism in Ireland. On September 11, the American Nation had its experience of terrorism condensed into little over thirty minutes. In Ireland's thirty years and America's thirty minutes -- the only difference between the two is scale and duration.

The most serious incidents during the Irish troubles in terms of loss of life were:

Loss of Life to Terrorism

On May 17, 1974, loyalist no-warning bombs killed 33 innocent people in Southern Ireland. No one was ever charged in connection with these bombs. Possibly some of you will remember the no-warning bomb, planted by the Real I.R.A. on August 15, 1998, in the market town of Omagh, County Tyrone. On that sunny Saturday afternoon, twenty-nine people, plus two children yet un-born, lost their lives. The Real I.R.A. is a dissident Republican Terrorist Group not connected with the Provisional I.R.A. or Sinn Fein. However, Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein leader, refused to call on people to help the police, North or South, with their investigation into this mass murder.



Loss of life to Terrorism

- May 17th 1974, 33 innocent people in Southern Ireland killed.
- August 15th 1998, Omagh, 29 people & 2 unborn children killed.
- August 27th 1979, 18 British Soldiers killed.
- February 17th 1978, 12 Protestant Civilians burned to death.
- 1978, Enniskillen, 11 people died.
- January 5th 1976, Kingsmill, 10 workmen killed.
- 1993, Belfast, 10 Saturday morning shoppers killed.

On August 27, 1979, the I.R.A. again, by means of no-warning bombs, killed eighteen British soldiers at Warrenpoint, just three miles from my own home. On January 30, 1972, fourteen civilians died as result of the British Army's Parachute Regiment opening fire on unarmed participants in a Nationalist Civil Rights march. The event became known as "Bloody Sunday," and it is generally accepted that this one chapter in the

violent history of Northern Ireland resulted in massive numbers of young boys and girls volunteering their services to the I.R.A. The will to join the Provisionals again surfaced during the Hunger Strike deaths of 1981.

On January 5, 1976, at Kingsmills, outside Newry, a mini-bus taking eleven workmen home from their place of employment in a nearby textile mill was stopped by an armed and masked gang believed to be members of the I.R.A. The only Catholic on board was singled out and pushed aside while his remaining ten colleagues, all Protestants, were lined up and murdered by the roadside. This terrible deed was believed to be in retaliation for the killing the previous evening, by Loyalist terrorists, of two sets of Catholic brothers who lived in the area.

On February 17, 1978, twelve Protestant civilians were burned to death when a no-warning I.R.A. firebomb exploded outside a ground floor window of the hotel room in which they were holding the Annual Dinner of the Irish Collie Club.

Other acts of terror that resulted in death in double figures include the eleven civilians who died in 1978 when the I.R.A. detonated a no-warning bomb as townsfolk in Enniskillen gathered to lay a wreath in memory of those local people that died on the battlefields of Europe during the First and Second World Wars. Similarly, another I.R.A. no-warning bomb killed ten Saturday-morning shoppers in Belfast in 1993.

I could go on, but I believe the incidents that I just recalled will help you accept what I said earlier; that is, the only difference between September 11 and Northern Ireland is scale and duration.

Terrorism is Terrorism

In the aftermath of September 11, it was quite disturbing to hear members of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the I.R.A., publicly stating that there was no comparison to be made between the attacks on the United States and the record of the I.R.A. The leader of Sinn Fein, Gerry Adams, even challenged the right of the media to question him about the September 11 attacks. He said there was a huge difference between attacks on innocent civilians and those on the armed forces. Adams conveniently forgot that the I.R.A. had murdered over 600 innocent civilians in Ireland. Moreover, his comments about members of the armed forces being killed would have brought joy and comfort to the ears of those who had organized and ordered the killings of military personnel in the Pentagon and the other innocent public servants in New York. Reportedly, even the



Confronting Terrorism – 2002

“ Living and Functioning under Terror – P. J. Bradley ♦ ©

aircraft that crashed in the field outside of Pittsburgh was trying to target other public servants. Please forgive me for repeating the differences - scale and duration. Terrorism is terrorism.

Both terror groups used human beings as bombs. On October 24 1990, the I.R.A. used 42 year-old Catholic father of three, Patsy Gillespie, to deliver a proxy bomb to a British army base in Derry. His wife and children were held hostage during the terror attack. The bomb was detonated by remote control while Patsy Gillespie was still inside the vehicle killing him and five British soldiers.

On the same night, one of my neighbors, Colman McAvoy, an old-age pensioner suffering from cancer, was also ordered by the I.R.A. to deliver a proxy bomb to an army checkpoint in Newry. Those who planned the attack told him that his two sons would be killed if he failed to deliver the bomb to the selected target. Just as Mr. McAvoy was leaving the vehicle, the bomb was detonated by remote control, killing a 21-year-old Irish Ranger. Mr. McAvoy was fortunate in that he only received a broken arm and broken leg.

There were other occasions when hoax proxy bombs were also used in an attempt to disrupt every day life and to create a false sense of security that just might continue until the time when the next proxy driver would deliver the real thing.

United in Terrorism

By these examples of how we lived and functioned under terror and by what you as a nation suffered on the September 11, it is easy to find comparisons. Over 3,000 dead, the bombing of important economic targets, hijacking, and use of civilians to deliver death and damage are common aspects to which we can both add the insult in which many in high places praised the perpetrators both in Ireland and America.

I reminded you earlier of the attitude of the Sinn Fein leadership towards those who tried to make comparisons between events in Ireland and those of September 11.

Justifying Terrorism

I believe that Gerry Adam's words, when speaking to his Annual Party Convention in October 2001, best describe the attitude of the political representatives of global paramilitary groups. At that convention which the American Ambassador attended, the Sinn Fein leader described as Freedom Fighters, those members of the I.R.A. who carried out many of the atrocities that I have just referred to and other similar acts of terror during our troubles. A lot of people, for a lot of different reasons, will never accept the I.R.A. as Freedom Fighters. My concern is that such a description will serve to encourage coming generations of misguided young people to take up the gun and the bomb if civility breaks down and violence returns.

Victory and Justice

Now that I have almost reached the end of the time allocated to me, I hope that I have managed to give you a little insight into the background of the Irish problem and as to how we lived and functioned under terror.

I offer no solutions, but if pressed as to where to commence the fight against terror, I would first refer you back to a single word that I used to explain my personal view as to why the terrorists were unable to attain the upper hand. The word I refer to is “dialogue.” Secondly, and here I apologize for referring to government and paramilitaries in the same sentence, recent history in Northern Ireland has clearly shown that when retaliation and revenge entered the scenario, neither side achieved any of their objectives. Of course, it should remain obligatory for governments to seek justice and victory over terrorism but that goal is possible without entering the realms of revenge. **Victory and justice always, revenge never.**

Finally, to the experts among you and those engaged in the fight against terrorism, I know that you will agree with me when I say that the emergence of radicalized religion, as a driving force behind lethal terrorism, is a fact that cannot be ignored. Religion is the connector between the sources and locations of most of the modern-day conflicts and their associated atrocities.

Throughout my address this morning, I deliberately avoided using quotations and words of wisdom from the more knowledgeable and famous than I. Therefore, I have granted myself one concession. I leave you with a comment from none other than His Lordship, the Bishop of London.

When analyzing modern terrorism from a religious perspective, His Lordship the Bishop of London said

“Modern multi-track peace building cannot afford to neglect the religious dimension, but religious leaders must find ways of turning their rhetoric into strategies that combat religious terror. Religious terrorism is both a sin against God and a threat to the world community.”

Confronting Terrorism – 2002

“ Living and Functioning under Terror – P. J. Bradley ♦ ©

P. J. BRADLEY

P.J. Bradley is a widely experienced public representative; he was first elected to Newry and Mourne District Council in 1981. The Newry & Mourne Area has approx. 90,000 residents. P.J. topped the poll in all six elections between 1981- 2001. He was Leader of the SDLP in Council until becoming Chairman of the body in 1991. He served as Chairman of the Council's Economic Development Committee for five years, during which time the Committee drew almost £9 million for the Newry and Mourne area.

He was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in June 1998, and in January 2000, SDLP Leader John Hume appointed him Party Spokesman for Agriculture & Rural Development. He is also the Deputy Whip for the SDLP Northern Ireland Assembly Group. P.J. has been a life long campaigner for Civil Rights and for the Reunification of Ireland by peaceful means. He is totally opposed to the use of Paramilitary violence for Political gain.

P.J. also founded "The McAteer Clan" in 1993 and is currently in the process of developing the cultural, economic exchange group "I.N.O.L.A." (Ireland New Orleans Louisiana).